
Prevalence of Adolescent Pregnancy among Secondary School Students in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Adolescent pregnancy has serious implication for poor academic performance, poverty and consequent dropout of school. This study investigated the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy among secondary school students in Ogbia Local Government area of Bayelsa State. 3 hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance. The study adopted the descriptive survey design. A sample of 300 female adolescents was selected using multistage sampling procedure. The instrument for data collection was the questionnaire made of sections; A, which concentrated on the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, B, dealt with questions on adolescent pregnancy. Data was analysed using T-test, Chi-square and ANOVA. Some of the findings of the study were that; there was no significant relationship between place of residence and prevalence of adolescent pregnancy (χ^2 , 33.846, $P = 0.688$), Parents level of education significantly affects the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy. (F , 3.390, cal 0.021) and that there exists no significant relationship between having a friend of the opposite sex (Z , 9.93, 1.19). Based on the findings of the study, the following some recommendations were made such as; Parents should be knowledgeable of the kind of friends kept by their wards, Government should employ health educators/guidance counsellors saddled with the responsibility of counselling in schools, and making contraceptives readily available and assessible to all adolescents.

Key words: *Adolescents Pregnancy, Prevalence, Ogbia, Bayelsa State.*

Introduction

Pregnancy takes physical, social, physiological and emotional preparation to accomplish or give birth. The Adolescent girl may become pregnant as a result of many factors, conditions or situations. Some adolescent girls become pregnant while involved in dating relationships, poor family upbringing, and low educational level of parents, it could also be due to rape and parental influence. All pregnancies are the result of sexual intercourse with the opposite sex, whether voluntary or involuntary. There is no doubt that certain factors could account for the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy among secondary school students. Such factors are place of residence, educational level of parents, and friends of the opposite sex. This research seeks to fathom the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy among Secondary Schools students in Ogbia local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

However, variables such as; Place of Residents, Educational level Parents and Friends of the Opposite sex interplay in adolescent pregnancy.

Place of Residence and Prevalence of Adolescent Pregnancy

According to Kinanee, (1996), the family is the first external world, which shapes the

personality development of the adolescent. In most polygamous homes where the children in homes are too many for the man to cater for, the girls indulge themselves in premarital sex in order to earn their living this leading them to becoming pregnant (Nigerian population November/December, 2005 Journal).

According to Blair, Jones & Simon (2002), an adolescent from such family may be tempted to be involved in promiscuity which may eventually lead to conception or other delinquent behaviours. Denga, (2009) opined that the family is traditionally meant to procreate, socialize and support its members and build the society. Family is considered as a major factor contributing to adolescent pregnancy and motherhood. Rosen, (1999), found that a growing number of adolescent girls lived in relatively unstable family situations and many became sexually intimate for a short-term sense of comfort. Hymowitz (2007) claimed that parental influence was the most significant variable in adolescent pregnancy; she concluded that absence of a father was the primary factor in adolescent girls becoming pregnant. Solomon and Card, (2004) also stated that lack of parental control can make the young girls have opportunity for conception. Surd (2000) who states that educating family's about sex and contraception can affect the adolescent likelihood of becoming pregnant, but Erick Erickson in his eight stages of development states that the adolescent period is identity versus role confusion, that this period is coherent sense of self plans to actualize one's abilities and negative resolution, indecisiveness and possible anti-social behaviour.

Herman & Giddens, (2000) reported that females who were sexually abused as children were three times more likely to become pregnant during their adolescent years and usually became pregnant at a younger age. Excess freedom on the part of the girls may be misused. It creates opportunities for sexual relationship and changing life styles. Abuse and misused of freedom by adolescent girl often leads them to an early pregnancy (Olamide, 2006). Briggs (2009), added that adolescent without proper supervision by their parents in early dating behaviour may likely result to pregnancy. This could also occur as a result of improper monitoring of the activities of children on the part of the parents, pornography is the depiction of erotic activities through motion or still pictures or literature with the intention to arouse sexual excitement. It is a major contributing factor to adolescent pregnancy as adolescents being highly impressionable to practice what they have seen and read (Rice, 2000).

According to Kinanee (2010), human personality is shaped to a great extent by the social experiences of an individual. Personality psychologist observed that social factors affect the characteristics of an individual as they grow from childhood to adulthood. Human beings generally internalize experiences from childhood within a given social set up. These experiences satisfy them; environmental factors that exert pressure on our personality formation are the culture in which, we are raised, our conditioning, the norms among the family, friends or special group, our birth order, the school and numerous others. Brindis & Philliber, 2003; Rothenberg & Weissman, 2002; Winter, 1997), stated that lack of positive role models and impoverished living situation, makes adolescent females decide to become pregnant or they 'drift' into pregnancy, as this decision appears to be their best option.

As many as 80% of unwedded adolescent mothers grew up in extreme poverty and the likelihood their children will grow up in poverty is high. Rosen, 1997; Maynard, 1995; Sarri & Phillips, 2004) added that, adolescents subjected to disadvantaged circumstances, such as living in poor racially segregated high crime communities, were more at risk of becoming pregnant during their adolescent years. Manlove (2002) reported that adolescent living in

poverty stricken neighbourhoods was more apt to engage in sexual intercourse, often leading to adolescent pregnancy and childbirth. Maynard, (2005) speculated that adolescent pregnancy and child bearing directly resulted in the intergenerational transfer of poverty. Van, (2007), indicated that adolescents from lower income families are more likely to report having sexual intercourse regardless of the family structure or race. It is further pointed out that adolescents from single-parent family homes are more likely to report having sexual intercourse regardless of the income of the family. Young adolescent growing up in poverty has a preconceived notion that their aspiration will never be fulfilled which leaves them with a lack of motivation to accomplish anything (Glicke, 2004). In fact, approximately one third of adolescent mothers drop out of school before pregnancy even occurs (Coley & Chase-lansdale, 1998).

Furthermore, there was an investigation on “Factors Contributing to Teenage Pregnancy in South Africa: The Case of Matjitjileng Village Tsoaledi Daniel Thobejane” (Daniel.thobejane@univen.ac.za). This was consequent upon the fact that teenage pregnancy in South Africa is growing rapidly among school-going pupils and it leads to school drop-out as the teenage mothers have to leave school to care for their babies. Teenage mothers add to the number of women who are illiterate. In Matjitjileng village, pregnancy among young people has reached pandemic heights. It seems lack of communication between parents and their children exacerbates the problem. The residents of this village still have the misconception that it is taboo to talk about sex with young people. Hence, this research investigated the causes and effects of teenage pregnancy in Matjitjileng Village, a sub-rural area situated in the Mogalakwena Municipality in Waterberg District of Limpopo Province, South Africa. The study found that most of the teenagers fell pregnant at the age of 16 and 19 years. Almost all of them fall pregnant because of lack of parental guidance and role models in the village. Most of them were influenced by their peers who fell pregnant at an early age and were ignorant about contraceptives. The study suggested radical programmes that are aimed at the reduction of teenage pregnancy and the holding of workshops that encourage abstinence and preventative measures against this scourge.

Adolescents in Uganda are increasingly starting sexual intercourse at early ages in their lives. Hence the study offers an in-depth analysis of the relative contribution of some socio-demographic factors in explaining adolescent pregnancy in Kabale district. Using primary data collected from different parts of the district, a sample of 301 female adolescents in age range of 10-24 years was studied. Results from the above models indicate that the level of education, place of residence, sex and age had significant impact on the dependent variable (adolescent pregnancy) while place of birth, religion and ethnicity were not significantly connected to adolescent pregnancy. The majority of the respondents were from rural areas. Adolescents who were peasants and rural based had a high percentage of pregnancy compared to those from urban areas.

Some of the risk factors that were likely to affect adolescents to have unwanted pregnancy were; peasantry, coming from a rural area, staying with parents, exposure to television messages, poor economic status, print media, lack of privacy, marriage before 18 years, lack of sex education and counseling against pregnancy. These factors were considered to pose high risks to adolescents because of studies that have been carried out by UNBOS, WHO, UNFPA and other health international organizations in developing countries. The district health team should therefore intensify health education through information, education and communication materials geared towards risk reeducation of adolescent pregnancy. These materials should mainly target peasants and adolescent girls. Kabale

district local council should lobby for a loan scheme from the central government, NGOs and other donors for the people to start income generating projects to reduce household poverty and also enact a by-law for girl children not to marry before the age of 18 years. Advocacy for proper house designs to ensure privacy between children and parents should be done by the district local leaders. Sex education should be started as early as 12 years by parents and teachers. The study therefore recommends effective programs for adolescents with their involvement. There is great benefit in strengthening their knowledge and skills through sex education. Greater efforts are essential in dealing with their special needs and appropriate services should be made available.

Education Level of Parents and Prevalence of Adolescent Pregnancy

This could be as a result of broken homes or single parenthood, where parents are not in good talking terms and the adolescent actualities are not properly controlled, also anxiety in parental role at home to supervise, monitor and give necessary guidance to the adolescent, (Akolawole, 2000). Larry (2009) pointed out that girls have low self-esteem or who are depressed may engage in sexual activity as a way of trying to make them feel better. Girls who have parents who are distracted or depressed may also feel the need to seek warmth and nurturing through sexual liaisons, thereby indulge into adolescent pregnancy.

According to Sarri & Phillips, (2004), Vilarosa (1997), stated that about two-third of adolescent mothers were previously sexually abused or raped by a step-father, or other relative, and often suffered from low self-esteem and depression. Premature sexual intercourse results in high rates of sexually transmitted diseases, HIV transmission, adolescent pregnancy and abortion (Mkhwanazi, 2006). Brown and Barbosa, 2001; Farber, 2003; Rothenberg and Weissman, 2002; Turner, 2004) state that, poor school performance plagued by low self-esteem the adolescent girls have no realistic expectations about education or occupation s thus, pregnancy is viewed as an alternative path to economic independence and adult status.

There was also a study on “Assessing the Effect of Teenage Pregnancy on Achieving Universal Basic Education in Ghana: A Case Study of Upper Denkyira West District” (socialanalyst2004@yahoo.com). The consequences of teenage pregnancy are gigantic and inimical to the wellbeing of adolescent population as well as development in the broad-spectrum. The research design employed for this study was the mixed approach. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were applied for the study. Purposive and snowball sampling techniques were applied in selecting respondents for the study and the sample size was 80. Questionnaire, structured interview and observation were the research instruments used to collect the data from the teenage mothers. Findings reveal that overpowering majority of 96.25% of the respondents stated that they have stopped school as a result of teenage pregnancy and teenagers mainly get educated on sex through their friends. The study concluded that that there are several factors that cause teenage pregnancy, teenagers principally depend of sex education from their peers and teenage and teenage pregnancy negatively impedes the goal of achieving universal basic education in Ghana and recommended that More effort is still indispensable to do with regards to particularly, the enforcement of relevant legal provisions and harnessing political will for adequate investment in adolescent related policies and programmes and the need for stringent enforcement of the laws against child-marriages and strict pursuance of the Free and Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE).

2.7 Friends of Opposite Sex and Prevalence of Adolescent Pregnancy

According to Olamide, (2006) influence of peers and their role in perpetuating

misinformation is another cause of adolescent pregnancy. Young ones are often misdirected or influenced by peer pressure. It is really true that youth prefer listening to their mates than older people. It is also true that young adolescents learn how to behave from one another instead of from adults. In their peer discussion, all that adolescents talk about is sex, clothes, and cosmetics. There is also likelihood of peers or relations mounting pressure on their innocent friends or young ones. Friends who have carelessly become pregnant and gave birth to babies in the past may put pressure on their friends to do the same thing by giving them false advantages attached to it. Older girls in the family who are prematurely pregnant may also put pressure on the innocent younger ones to prove their fertility.

It is a known fact that neighbours, strangers, acquaintances, and friends are usually perpetrators of sexual violence. Cases of rape are also rampant and it is believed to lead not only to early pregnancy but also to sexually transmitted disease (STD) (Olamide, 2006). During this period, adolescents have strong attachments to their peer group. They believe they are matured and can make meaningful decision, which invariably are a mere of fantasies. Some of the risk factors that were likely to affect adolescents to have unwanted pregnancy were; peasantry, coming from a rural area, staying with parents, exposure to television messages, poor economic status, print media, lack of privacy, marriage before 18 years, lack of sex education and counselling against pregnancy. These factors were considered to pose high risks to adolescents because of studies that have been carried out by UNIDO, WHO, UNFPA and other health international organizations in developing countries. The district health team should therefore intensify health education through information, education and communication materials geared towards risk reduction of adolescent pregnancy. These materials should mainly target peasants and adolescent girls. Kabale district local council should lobby for a loan scheme from the central government, NGOs and other donors for the people to start income generating projects to reduce household poverty and also enact a by-law for girl children not to marry before the age of 18 years. Advocacy for proper house designs to ensure privacy between children and parents should be done by the district local leaders. Sex education should be started as early as 12 years by parents and teachers. The study therefore recommends effective programs for adolescents with their involvement. There is great benefit in strengthening their knowledge and skills through sex education. Greater efforts are essential in dealing with their special needs and appropriate services should be made available.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Most pregnancies by adolescent are described as unwanted. It is so described because it stops the girl-child from schooling as soon as it occurs, thus truncating her future. There is no provision of the education law that allows pregnant students in secondary schools. So, this has a serious implication for school population by the pregnant adolescent girl-child. For the young mother, the risks of child bearing became catastrophic in secondary school and early pregnancy usually terminates her chance of going back to school. Sometimes, adolescent pregnancy results among adolescents who form friends with members of the opposite sex based on self-identity, self-definition and self-interest. The girls are attracted to going out with the most popular boys in school or neighbourhood not knowing the implication of what they are into. Adolescent pregnancy could cause poor academic performance in school and a girl might have to drop out of school. Adolescent pregnancy and early motherhood could be associates with poverty; most girls who fall victims of pregnancy come from lower socio-economic group. It has been observed that adolescents who engaged in sexual behaviour put them at the risk of having sexually transmitted infections. A girl who becomes pregnant at an early age is believed to have lost her self-esteem or value. Adolescent pregnancy is also

associated with health problems such as; pregnancy induces hypertension, anaemia, surgical operation and maternal death.

In view of the above the researchers are poised to determine the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy among secondary school students in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa state, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study was to investigate the Prevalence of Adolescent Pregnancy among Secondary School Students, in Ogbia local Government Area, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Research Hypotheses:

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study;

H01: There is no significant relationship between place of residence and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy among secondary school students in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

H02: There is no significant relationship between educational level of parents and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy among secondary schools in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

H03: There is no significant relationship between friends of opposite sex and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy among secondary schools in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

3.1 Area for the Study

The study is carried out in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. Ogbia Kingdom has three (3) geographical groups (Clans) namely, Oloibiri, Kolo/Emeyal and Anyama. The people are mainly farmers, fishermen/women; small time hunters, sand-dredgers and Civil servants. The major medium of communication is Ogbia dialect and the English Language.

Research Design

The study adopted the descriptive survey design. In this study, the researcher collected data on the population of unmarried adolescent female students in the secondary schools in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State, and described the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy without manipulating any variable.

3.3 Population for the Study: The population for the study consisted of all the secondary school Adolescents in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample for study was three hundred (300) adolescent females in Ogbia Local Government Area, Bayelsa State. Multi stage sampling was adopted thus; simple random sampling was used to select three schools from each clan, stage 2. Implored stratification based on class of study.

3.7 Instrument for Data Collection

The instrument for collection of data in this study was the Prevalence of Adolescent Pregnancy Questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of two sections; A and B. Section A

concentrated on the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents' information such as age, sex, marital status, level of education, religion, place of residence and parents level of education. Section B dealt with friends of opposite sex.

3.5 Validity of the Instrument

The instrument was validated by three specialists in the Departments of Human Kinetics, Health and Safety Education, Educational Psychology, Measurement and Evaluation of the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt. Comments, corrections, suggestions and advice were used write the final copy of the instrument.

Results

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between place of residence and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy among secondary schools in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State.

Table1: Chi-squared test showing relationship place of residence and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy

Place of residence	Prevalence of adolescent pregnancy		Total	Df	X ² -value	P-values	Decision
	Yes	No					
Urban	2	15	17				
Sub-urban	71	29	100	8	33.846	0.688	Rejected
Rural	111	41	152				
Total	184	85	269				

*Significant

Table 4.8 shows that the X²-value of 33.846 at 0.05 significant level was greater than the P-value of 0.688, showing that there is a significant relationship.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between educational level of parents and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy among secondary schools in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State

Table 2: One-Way ANOVA of Parents' level of education and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy

Source	SS	Df	MSS	F-cal	F-table	Decision
Between groups	44.645	2	22.322	3.930	0.021	Rejected
Within groups	1596.155	281	5.680			
Total	1640.799	283				

*P>0.05

Table 4.6 shows that the F-calculated (3.930) at 0.05 level of significance is greater than the F-tabulated (0.021). The null hypothesis is rejected.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship between friends of opposite sex and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy among secondary schools in Ogbia Local Government Area of Bayelsa State

Table 3: T-test Summary of relationship between friends of opposite sex and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy

Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Decision
Have a friend of opposite sex	208	1.97	2.23	299	9.93	1.19	Rejected
Do not have a friend of opposite sex	73	1.53	1.11				

*P>0.05

Table 4.10 shows that t-calculated is 9.93 and t-tabulated is 1.19. t-cal (9.93) is greater than t-tab (1.19) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

Relationship between place of residence and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy

The result of the finding in table 4.8 shows a chi-value $X^2 = 33.846$, $P = 0.688$, of 8 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The result shows that there is a significant relationship between place of residence and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy among secondary schools. This finding can be attributed to the reason that, the environment of the individual poses a significant influence on him/her. The influence of environment on adolescents cannot be overemphasized. According to Kinanee, (1996), the environment shapes the personality development of the adolescents and the immediate environment of an individual is the family which is the first external world.

The finding of this study is similar to the report of Blair, Jones and Simon, (2002); Nigerian Population Council, (2005); that, adolescents from polygamous homes where the children in the homes are too many for the man to cater for, the children resort to indulging themselves in premarital sex in order to earn their living this leading them to becoming pregnant. The finding of this study is in line with that of Manlove, (2002) who reported that, adolescent living in poverty stricken neighbourhood were more apt to engage in sexual intercourse, often leading to adolescent pregnancy and childbirth. The finding of this study also supports that of Rothenberg & Weissman, (2002); Brindis & Philliber, (2003) who documented that in an environment that there is lack of positive role models and impoverished living situation, adolescent particularly the females, decide to become pregnant or they 'drift' into pregnancy, as this decision appears to be their best option. However, Surd, (2000) stated that, educating families about sex and contraception can affect the adolescent likelihood of becoming pregnant, the residence notwithstanding.

Educational level of parents and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy

The result of the finding in table 4.9 shows an ANOVA $F =$ calculated value of 3.930, $F =$ tabulated value of 0.021, of 2 at 0.05 alpha level of significance; showing that there is a significant relationship between educational level of parents and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy among secondary schools. This finding might be due to the fact that, the educational exposure of the parents influences the lifestyle of the children in the study area.

The finding of this study is similar to that of Coley and Chase-lansdale, (1998) who documented that one third of adolescent mothers drop out of school before pregnancy occurs. The finding of this study is also in line with that of [Mchunu](#), [Peltzer](#), [Tutshana](#) and [Seutlwadi](#), (2012) who noted that adolescent pregnancy was associated with such factors as parents educational level. This similarity between the previous studies and the present one might be

due to the fact that, the both studies were carried out in the school setting.

Friends of opposite sex and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy

The result of the finding in table 4.10 shows t-calculated value of 9.93, t-tabulated value of 1.19, of 299 at 0.05 alpha level of significance; showing that there is a significant relationship between friends of opposite sex and the prevalence of adolescent pregnancy. This finding can be attributed to the influence of peers and their role in perpetuating misinformation is another cause of adolescent pregnancy.

This finding is in line with Olamide, (2006) who stated that, there is also likelihood of peers mounting pressure on their innocent friends or young ones; friends who have carelessly become pregnant and gave birth to babies in the past may put pressure on their friends to do the same thing by giving them false advantages attached to it. The reason for the similarity might be that the above report was made in the same State where the present study was carried out.

5.3 Recommendations

The results of this research necessitated that certain measures should be taken in order to prevent adolescent pregnancy. The researcher therefore offers the following recommendations which can be of tremendous use if adhered to.

- ❖ Parents should be watchful on the type of companies their children keep and encourage them to bring their friends home.
- ❖ Government should employ Health Educators/Guidance Counsellors and post them to schools to intensify education/counselling the youths on adolescent pregnancy and how it can be prevented.
- ❖ Government should establish a rehabilitation to rehabilitate the adolescents that fall victim of pregnancy related cases.
- ❖ Planned Parenthood Federation of Nigeria and social welfare homes etc should create awareness and sensitized the female students in the schools as this would provide increase knowledge about contraceptives and prevent the risk of early pregnancy.
- ❖ Government should make contraceptive services readily available to the rural population; including young people's access to such facilities. This would help in preventing cases of adolescent pregnancies and spread of sexually transmitted infections.

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